

HOUSE RESOLUTION 297

By Yokley

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory and legacy of Leora Hankins Bullen of Greeneville.

WHEREAS, at rare times in the history of this great nation the legacy and impact of one individual on her community, her fellow citizens, and the generations yet to come extends farther than any scale can measure; and

WHEREAS, such a truly noble and humane individual was Leora Hankins Bullen of Greeneville, Tennessee, who for decades was a renown community leader and inspirational educator with the Greeneville City School system, sharing her lifetime of compassion, wisdom, and public service to the citizens of Greene County; and

WHEREAS, serving as a mentor to scores of young teachers, Leora Bullen led them to understand the true characteristic of successful teachers – to genuinely care about students and bring out their strengths regardless of individual differences and circumstances; and

WHEREAS, in her capacity as an attendance supervisor she exhibited unconditional love as she often went into troubled homes and brought students to school, feeding them breakfast, securing warm clothing and school supplies for them. She never failed to instruct their teachers to be extra considerate as she explained each child's special needs situation; and

WHEREAS, a strong woman with a steadfast belief in equality, Leora Hankins Bullen was a leader in the Greeneville community during desegregation, riding the school buses everyday to make sure the children, both black and white, got to school without incident; and

WHEREAS, Leora Bullen was a champion for the rights of women, believing that a woman's right to choose meant that young women not only had the right to reproductive choice, but the right to quality education, and quality jobs. She taught women that self respect led to the respect of others; and

WHEREAS, proud to be a member of the Democratic Party, Leora Hankins Bullen was a charter member and co-founder of the Greene County Democratic Women's Club. Working

tirelessly, she helped elect her brother to the post of County Court Clerk as the only Democrat to hold an office in Greene County government at that time; and

WHEREAS, the Greene County Democratic Women's Club, under the leadership of President Randi Nott, continues to honor Ms. Bullen's efforts today through the Leora Bullen Scholarship Fund; established in 1997 during the presidency of Ginny Kidwell, the scholarship fund seeks to assist in furthering the educational goals of the next generation of leaders; and

WHEREAS, Leora Bullen was an active and devout member of Greeneville Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which she served faithfully for many years, having been one of the first women to be ordained by the church as an elder; and

WHEREAS, Leora Bullen was also deeply devoted to her family, and was the proud mother of one daughter, Gypsy Bullen Norton, and the devoted grandmother of two treasured grandchildren, Dr. Doug Norton and Kitty Norton Jones, who she helped raise after the tragic death of their father, instilling in them the values she held dear; and

WHEREAS, the personification of the Southern lady, Leora Hankins Bullen enriched and influenced the lives of all who were fortunate to know her, and that influence continues today through her grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Her unmatched record in service to her family, her community, and her state stands as a monument to a life well lived; and

WHEREAS, it is especially appropriate for this body to honor the memory of a woman who truly epitomized the very definition of the words dignity, determination, and faith, becoming a role model and heroic figure for all who knew her and those whose lives she touched and whose her legacy reaches out to today; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Leora Hankins Bullen of Greeneville, Tennessee, who lived the examined life with courage, commitment, and devotion to improving the lives of all the citizens of Greeneville and Greene County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.